

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9745

INFO RUQVKR/ AMCONSUL KARACHI 9241

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: CENTO, PFOR, PK

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN REACTION TO CENTO MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING

SUMMARY: PAK NEWS MADIA GAVE TEHRAN CENTO MEETING
RESTRAINED PLAY. EDITORIAL COMMENT SPARSE BUT
FAVORABLE. OPPOSITION LEADERS TOOK OCCASION TO DENOUNCE
CENTO. GOP OFFICIAL EXPRESSED LOW- KEYED SATISFACTION
WITH MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. CENTO MINISTERIAL MEETING IN TEHRAN RECEIVED
PROMINENT, IF LIMITED, COVERAGE IN PAKISTAN PRESS.
SECRETARY ROGERS' AND MINISTER AZIZ AHMED' S OPENING
PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND COMMUNIQUE AS SUMMARIZED BY NEWS
AGENCIES WERE FEATURED IN MOST NEWSPAPERS.

2. HANDFUL OF NEWSPAPERS WHICH COMMENTED EDITORIALY
TOOK GENERALLY POSITIVE VIEW OF MEETING. GOVERNMENT-
CONTROLLED KARACHI MORNING NEWS OBSERVED THAT CENTO HAD
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COME TO ACCEPT FACT THAT COMMON FACOTR IN SECURITY PROBLEM IN AREA WAS MASSIVE SOVIET MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO HOSTILE NEIGHBORS OF PAKISTAN AND IRAN. MORNING NEWS AND OTHER NEWSPAPERS PREDICTABLY TOOK SATISFACTION OVER INCLUSION OF REFERENCES TO POW REPATRIATION IN COMMUNIQUE. GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PAKISTAN TIMES (LAHORE AND RAWALPINDI) COMMENTED THAT " CENTO HAS BOUNCED BACK TO LIFE" AT TEHRAN MEETING " MARKED BY A NEW SENSE OF PURPOSE AND URGENCY." OPPOSITION DAWN (KARACHI), IN ARTICLE CRITICAL OF GOP INFORMATION POLICIES RE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NOTED INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN PRESIDENT BHUTTO' S VARIOUS RECENT PRONOUNCEMENTS ON " IMPROVING" PAKISTAN" SOVIET TIES AND " THE ANXIETY EXPRESSED IN . . . TEHRAN ABOUT THE EXTENT AND DEPTH OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN PAKISTAN WHICH IT HAD BEEN SUGGESTED HAD SOME CONNECTION WITH THE SOVIET UNION." INTERESTINGLY, GOVERNMENT- CONTROLLED NEWSPAPERS HAVE NOT SO FAR PUBLISHED AZIZ AHMED' S INTERVIEW WITH KHAYAN INTERNATIONAL (TEHRAN 4211).

3. MEETING PROVOKED DENUNCIATIONS OF PAKISTAN' S CONTINUED CENTO MEMBERSHIP AND NEW ATTACKS ON SHAH FROM LEADING POLITICIANS OF OPPOSITION NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY. NAP PRESIDENT WALI KHAN CHIDED BHUTTO FOR VIOLATING ELECTION PLEDGE TO WITHDRAW FROM CENTO AND FOR PERMITTING PAKISTAN TO BE USED AS " PAWN" BY GREAT POWERS.

4. EMBOFF DISCUSSED CENTO MEETING JUNE 20 WITH MFA DIRECTOR FOR CENTO, DEHLAVI, WHO ATTENDED SESSION. DEHLAVI WAS GUARDED IN HIS COMMENTS BUT INDICATED LOW- KEYED SATISFACTION OVER COMMUNIQUE' S INCLUSION OF REFERENCE TO TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, WHICH HE SAID WAS INSERTED AT PAKISTAN' S INITIATIVE. HE COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON GIVE AND TAKE WHICH MARKED RESTRICTED SESSIONS.

5 COMMENT: GOP HAS CONTINUING PUBLIC RELATIONS DILEMNA IN RECONCILING BHUTTO' S EARLIER PUBLIC COMMITMENTS TO WITHDRAW FROM CENTO WITH CURRENT POLICY OF ENHANCED PAKISTANI PARTICIPATION IN CENTO BEGINNING WITH LONDON 19 TH MINISTERIAL. MOREOVER, BHUTTO' S MOST VOCAL AND STRONGEST OPPOSITION, NAP, IS ANTI- CENTO, ANTI- IRAN AND LEARY OF CHARGES OF SOVIET SUBVERSION WITH WHICH GOP TENDS TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LINK TO NAP. STRAIGHT- FORWARD BUT SKETCHY MEDIA TREATMENT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN GOP' S 1973 ANSWER TO ITS PROBLEM. SOBER

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